

West German Hostage Update - 1 July 1987

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Bonn's Actions in Wake of Decision to Deny Extradition

The West German Interior Ministry has ordered increased security at West German airports and borders, as well as on flights into West Germany in the wake of terrorist threats purportedly aimed at forcing the release of accused TWA 847 hijacker Mohammad Ali Hammadi, according to press reports. Security has also reportedly been increased for West German airplanes and facilities, and the Kohl government has advised West German citizens to leave Lebanon.

- According to a report in the West German magazine Stern, the Federal Criminal Office (BKA) has warned the Chancellery crisis committee that a six-man Hizballah commando team had been dispatched from Lebanon and would transit Syria and Cyprus enroute to committing terrorist actions on West German soil. []

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believe the potential threat to West German citizens and interests remains high. []

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We do not place much credance in Hizballah spiritual leader Shaykh Mohammad Husayn Fadlallah's public statement earlier this week that he has

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"the feeling the case of the two Germans can be solved faster than other cases of this kind" since the decision not to extradite Hammadi "made the matter easier." Fadlallah's optimism regarding early release of Western hostages has often been misplaced and we doubt that he has any real control over the captors of West Germans Rudolf Cordes and Alfred Schmidt.

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While the Kohl government has vigorously denied a West German magazine allegation that Hesse Minister-President Walter Wallmann, a member of Kohl's Christian Democrats, will pardon Hammadi after the latter's trial and sentencing in that state's court, we believe Bonn will continue to seek a deal with the captors of the West Germans. We doubt this would involve a two-for-two swap, but a granting of clemency is almost certainly an option. Following the Kohl government's decision regarding Hammadi last week, Social Democratic Middle East expert Hans-Juergen Wischnewski also pledged to continue his efforts to secure the release of the hostages.

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